



San Diego City Attorney **CASEY GWINN**

MEDIA RELEASE

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OWNER OF CHEMICAL COMPANY SENTENCED TO JAIL FOR HAZARDOUS MATERIALS VIOLATIONS

A part-owner of Atlas Chemical, a San Diego chemical supply company, was sentenced to 60 days in custody for violating probation on a previous conviction for illegal transportation of hazardous materials. Julie Ellery was accused of violating probation by failing to complete court-ordered hazardous materials training for Atlas Chemical employees, and for having a truck transport hazardous chemicals that were leaking, not properly secured, and without proper shipping papers.

While Ellery would only admit a violation based on not completing the training, Superior Court Judge Rafael Arreola considered the great risk to the public by Atlas allowing trucks on the road carrying leaking chemicals.

These violations were especially serious since two of the chemicals on the truck, if mixed, could have resulted in a fire and toxic gases. The resulting fires and toxic gases are particularly dangerous to other drivers and passengers on the road, and could result in an automobile accident with serious injuries or death.

In addition to serving time in jail, Ellery must pay to have all the company's drivers and loaders attend an eight-hour hazardous materials transportation course through UCSD's OSHA Training Institute. Ellery, also in charge of her company's safety compliance, must complete the training as well, and will be on probation for an additional three years.

"We take environmental crimes very seriously in the City of San Diego," said San Diego City Attorney Casey Gwinn, whose office prosecuted the case. "Judge Arreola delivered a strong message to business owners who not only fail to follow the Court's orders, but also put the public at great risk," Gwinn added, recalling an incident several years ago when pool chemicals spilled onto the freeway resulting in the deaths of three San Diegans.

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